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FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5301

INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE

RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 6068

RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 3512

RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 2022

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 NEW DELHI 002092

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/02/2017

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [SCUL](#) [KDEM](#) [KISL](#) [IN](#)

SUBJECT: LATEST UTTAR PRADESH POLL CONFIRMS CONTINUED
SAMAJWADI PARTY DECLINE

REF: A. NEW DELHI 1946

[1B.](#) NEW DELHI 1915

[1C.](#) NEW DELHI 1699

[1D.](#) NEW DELHI 1675

[1E.](#) NEW DELHI 1508

Classified By: Acting Political Counselor Atul Keshap for reasons 1.4 (B,D)

[11.](#) (C) Summary: The fifth phase of seven phases of the Uttar Pradesh (UP) election concluded on April 28, with a growing consensus that this election will likely spell the end of SP rule. An effective Election Commission has prevented the ruling Samajwadi Party (SP) from using dirty tricks to rig the polls and things are not going well for Chief Minister Mulayam Singh Yadav. UP contacts claim he is increasingly depressed about the election outcome, while a confident Mayawati has promised to jail Mulayam and his henchmen if she comes to power. At one point, Mulayam hoped he could retain power by making an "arrangement" with the BJP, which is gaining strength in this election. However, the BJP leadership decided that an alliance with the repugnant and discredited Mulayam was too high a price to pay and publicly bowed out. This all but precludes a BJP or SP government post election and there is growing speculation regarding a possible relationship between the front-running BSP of former Chief Minister Mayawati and Congress.

Ironically, Congress, which is so often counted out in UP, could emerge as the kingmaker. Should Mayawati fall short of a majority as most expect, she would need Congress support to get her over the top. Press reports and rumors indicate that Congress is prepared to impose President's rule on the troubled state if Mayawati fails to win enough seats to come within striking distance. End Summary.

Almost Without a Hitch

[12.](#) (C) Uttar Pradesh (UP) held the fifth phase of its seven phase Legislative Assembly Election on April 28,. The Election Commission maintained its sterling record, ensuring a practically trouble-free contest. Polling took place in 57

constituencies in Central and East UP, including the state capital in Lucknow. Voter turnout of 46 percent was much lower than the 53.65 percent registered in the 2002 polls. The low turn-out could have resulted from the heat wave currently engulfing UP or the absence of "silent rigging." In the 2002 polls, political parties, especially the Samajwadi Party (SP), told voters not to come to the polls, as their "votes were taken care of." Party officials would then vote on behalf of the electorate, resulting in an inflated participation rate. Observers agree that "silent rigging" was absent from this contest.

¶3. (C) The poverty-stricken villages of East UP have long been home to criminal politicians such as Raghuraj Pratap Singh (alias Raja Bhaiyya), who was an MLA and Food Minister in a previous SP government. Singh maintained his own private army of "gunmen," who terrorized the entire region. Villagers told Poloff during his recent tour of East UP that Singh kept a farmhouse where he would torture his victims to death and feed their bodies to live alligators. When Mayawati became Chief Minister she immediately sent police to shut down the "farm," which was purportedly littered with human bones, and arrest Raja Bhaiyya. Contesting for a seat under the SP banner in this contest, Raja Bhaiyya repeatedly complained to the EC that his followers (who did not have proper identification), were not allowed to vote.
Mayawati on the Warpath

¶4. (C) Addressing a campaign rally in Allahabad on April 29, Mayawati pledged to "dislodge the mafia raj of Mulayam Singh and Amar Singh,...order an inquiry into their bunglings and severely punish the guilty." She told her supporters that

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she had sent Raja Bhaiya and his notorious colleague Atiq Ahmed to jail before and would put them behind bars again, as soon as she is sworn in as Chief Minister. After cleansing the state of its ruling mafias, Mayawati promised to "weed out corruption and ensure equitable development of all sections of society." UP informants who attended Mayawati rallies claim that this simple message was greeted with rousing applause by voters fed up with the insecurity and criminality of current UP, and that Mayawati's one-point election plank could propel her to power in Lucknow. Raja Bhaiya has publicly conceded that he takes Mayawati's promises at face value and that he, Mulayam and Amar Singh will go to jail if she forms the next UP government. Mulayam has in campaign speeches urged voters to cast their vote for the SP and "keep me out of prison."

Polling Claims Mayawati on Top

¶5. (U) Four TV newschannels conducted exit polls. NDTV projected the following result in fifth phase (57 seats):

BJP - 21 seats

BSP - 14 seats

SP - 10 seats

Congress - nine seats

Others - three seats

The BJP has an unusually high seat tally in this phase, as its principal following is among urbanites, most especially in Lucknow, which is the home base of former Prime Minister AB Vajpayee. The BJP does not do as well in the rural areas, where it has little support.

¶6. (U) As regards the final state-wide outcome, all agreed that Mayawati's BSP will win the top spot in the four way contest. Three polls show the BJP surpassing the SP to

occupy the number two position, with SP slipping to third. NDTV projected the following seat tally as the final statewide outcome in the 403 member assembly:

BSP - 120-130 seats (a revival)

BJP - 115-125 (quite strong)

SP - 95-105 (damaged goods)

Congress - 35-45 (doldrums)

The Sinking Ship

¶7. (C) As the polling progresses, Mulayam has become visibly deflated. Insiders have claimed to Poloff that he has seen the writing on the wall and has grown increasingly desperate.

At the campaign's outset, Mulayam was confident that he could use "silent polling," and intimidation by his "army of goons," to rig the polls and keep him in power. He did not count on the presence of an effective Election Commission, a special seven phase poll, and the presence of thousands of security personnel. As a result, his is the only party to complain of election irregularities and call the veracity of the polling into question. All other parties have praised this contest as among the most free and fair ever.

Grasping At Straws

¶8. (C) Desperate to retain power, Mulayam opened negotiations with the BJP to come to an "arrangement" that would allow a BJP government to come to power with SP

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support. On April 28, Poloff spoke with Lucknow politicians and journalists who maintained that the negotiations have been called off without agreement. They reported that the BJP could not bring itself to ally with the immensely unpopular and discredited Mulayam, and the BJP has released an official announcement ruling out formation of a government with the SP or BSP.

Could Congress Hold the Key?

¶9. (C) With Mulayam out of the picture, speculation has now turned to Congress and the possibility that it could emerge as the UP "kingmaker" in a confused four way contest. On April 28, Congress President Sonia Gandhi, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Congress leaders met to discuss their options in UP. Leaks from the meeting reported in the press indicate that Congress is seriously considering a plan to impose President's rule almost immediately after the election results are declared. This has been buttressed by recent statements by Union Minister of State for Home Sriprakash Jaiswal, (himself an influential UP politician), and UPA Ministers Lalu Prasad Yadav and Ram Vilas Paswan hinting that President's rule is "a strong possibility."

¶10. (C) Mayawati, who has fielded candidates in all 403 contests, continues to insist that she will be able to form the government on her own, but practically no one takes her assertions at face value. Most pundits assess that should the BSP win 150 seats or above, it will ask for Congress support to push her over the required 202 seats. A cocky and confident Jaiswal stated that "the Congress would have the key to government-formation and it would ensure that any party other than the BJP and Samajwadi Party forms the next Government." However, Congress has purportedly not yet decided whether it should join a BSP government should the opportunity arise, or support it from "outside." Many within the Congress leadership are starting to turn their longing gaze towards President's rule as the best of all possible worlds.

¶11. (U) Visit New Delhi's Classified Website:
(<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/sa/newdelhi/>)
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